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Heber-Overgaard Fire Dept



Fire
Protection

2061 Lumber Valley Rd.
P.O. Box 1010 • Overgaard, AZ 85933
Office (928) 535-4146
Fax (928) 535-3175



Emergency Medical
Service

Arizona Corporation Commission

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July 24, 2014

Bob Stump, Chairman
Gary Pierce, Commissioner
Brenda Burns, Commissioner
Susan Bitter Smith, Commissioner
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Docket No. W-01445A-11-0310 – System Improvement Benefits (SIB) Surcharge
for Replacing Aging and Failing Water Infrastructure

Dear Commissioners:

The Heber-Overgaard Fire District supports the Arizona Corporation Commission's efforts to help water utilities replace aging and failing water infrastructure and the System Improvement Benefits (SIB) surcharge mechanism.

As a public safety agency in Navajo County, we are charged with protecting the public's safety, especially by providing fire protection. Beyond the need to make sure that water is safe to drink and service is reliable, when firefighters respond to a fire, they need to know they can rely on each and every fire hydrant to have good water pressure and flow. Our jobs and people's lives depend on this.

The state has been in a protracted drought for more than ten years and continued lack of rain could increase the risk and severity of a fire. That is why it is critically important to ensure that utilities maintain adequate supplies of water and replace aging and undersized water infrastructure. Any reasonable solution to this challenge should be considered. The SIB mechanism seems to be a reasonable (and practical) solution that would help utilities replace aging and undersized infrastructure with small gradual rate increases. Arizona Water Company's first requested surcharge for its Cochise division Bisbee and Sierra Vista customers is 82 cents per month. At less than three cents per day for a family, this seems to be a small price to pay to help protect public safety.

We support the Commission and urge you to approve the SIB surcharge.


Fire Chief Rich Upham
Heber-Overgaard Fire District
Chief@hofdaz.com
Cell Phone 928-240-0444

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